

OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK

Fiscal Year 2009

The Town Clerk's office prepared for and conducted four elections in FY 09: the State Primary on September 16, 2008, the State/Presidential Election on November 4, 2008, a Special Town Election on November 4, 2008, and the Annual Town Election on March 31, 2009.

2008 was a Presidential election year.

The Town Clerk's office began preparations early for what was anticipated to be a record turnout for the Presidential election. This challenge was made even greater when the Select Board voted to hold a Special Town Election on the same day to fill the vacancy created by Anne Awad's resignation from the Select Board.

I believe this was the greatest challenge that the Town Clerk's office has ever had to deal with in terms of elections.

At Amherst Town Meeting on November 10, 2008, Town Manager Larry Shaffer recognized Town Clerk Sandra Burgess and the staff in the Town Clerk's office for their recent accomplishments in preparation for the November 4, 2008 State/National and Special Town Elections.

The successful preparation and conducting of these two elections would not have been possible without the help of many people.

The staff in the Town Clerk's office, including Roger Frant who was hired to fill the temporary position created for this purpose, worked very hard for many long hours, especially in the three weeks leading up to the elections and, of course, on Election Day.

A dedicated band of poll workers, many of them brand new, worked from early morning until late at night. These dedicated folks showed up in huge numbers to the training sessions held prior to the elections and were instrumental in quickly and efficiently processing voters through the polling locations on Election Day. Several poll workers also volunteered to come into the office in the days preceding the election to help us with election preparation. They were A.P. Stevens, Jim Scott, Billie Callahan and Carolyn Mailler and her husband Carl.

The League of Women Voters also responded to my request for assistance with many members signing up to help voters check their voter information at each polling location. Rachael Mustin, Carol Rothery and Joan Rabin also came into the office and helped.

Critical to the smooth running of the election was the cooperation which I received from the registrars at Amherst and Hampshire colleges and the assistance of Martha Nelson Patrick at the University of Massachusetts in the delivery of information to voters on campus.

Mary Carey of the Daily Hampshire Gazette was also instrumental in delivering this important information to readers.

I am so proud to work with a very fine group of Department Heads at Town Hall, many of whom stepped forward to assist by releasing staff members to work in the Town Clerk's office. Two people

who deserve special recognition are Lori Turati from the Assessor's office and Judith Arcamo from the Town Manager's office. Lori and Judith stayed late to assist us on several occasions.

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Two special Town meetings were held on November 10, 2008 and November 17, 2008.

The Annual Town Meeting which began on May 4, 2009, lasted for eight sessions and deliberated on thirty articles. This was a remarkable achievement given the challenge of voting a budget in such a daunting economic time.

Annual Town Meeting also amended our Human Rights Bylaw to extend protections to individuals in the category of gender identity or expression and genetic information.

In the summer of 2007, the Town Clerk's office began overhauling its vital records indexing system. Vital record indexes are an inventory of all the records in the custody of the Town Clerk. These indices are vital to the location of records when dates of birth, death, or marriage are unknown to individuals requesting certified copies and other data. I am happy to report that this project has been completed, resulting in faster accessibility to vital records information and much-needed freed-up space in the Town Clerk vault.

Respectfully submitted,
Sandra J. Burgess CMC, CMMC
Town Clerk

2008 Vitals

(The Town Clerk is required to report
to the Registry of Vital Records and Statistics
on a calendar-year basis)

Births 182

Deaths 171

Marriages 109

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